

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00  
INR-05 CIAE-00 PM-03 SP-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 L-01  
EUR-08 INRE-00 /047 W  
-----051429Z 067663 /43

O 051312Z APR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2444  
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY  
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA  
AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 4844

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR IN  
SUBJECT: INDO-US RELATIONS

1.A BRIEF INFORMAL CONVERSATION WITH FOREIGN SECRETARY  
MAHTA ON THE EVENING OF APRIL 4 HAS PROVIDED ADDITIONAL  
INSIGHT INTO THE ATTITUDES OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT  
TOWARD THE US.

2. MEHTA TOLD ME THAT IN ORDER TO MOVE INDIAN FOREIGN  
POLICIES IN THE DIRECTION THE GOI DESIRED IT WAS FIRST  
NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH THE CONTINUITY OF THOSE POLICIES.  
ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT SO STATE, IT WAS OBVIOUS FROM  
MEHTA'S REMARKS THAT THE PROMI MINISTER'S EARLY PUBLIC  
COMMENTS ABOUT THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT'S TOO CLOSE RELATIONSHIP  
WITH THE SOVIET UNION CONSTITUTED AN OBSTACLE IN THE  
WAY OF ACHIEVING THIS. MEHTA SAID THAT THE FOREIGN  
MINISTER'S MEETING WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR MALTSEV  
DURING THE FORMER'S EARLY DAYS IN OFFICE WAS IMPORTANT TO  
DEMONSTRATING CONTINUITY. ONCE SUCH CONTINUITY WAS  
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ESTABLISHED, MEHTA SAID THAT THE GOI COULD GO ABOUT  
THE BUSINESS OF ESTABLISHING ITS POLICIES. THEY WOULD,  
HE SAID, EMERGE IN TERMS OF WHAT THE GOI DOES WITH  
OTHER COUNTRIES RATHER THAN IN PUBLIC DECLARATIONS.  
FINALLY MEHTA SAID THAT ONE NEED ONLY EXAMINE THE  
ATTITUDES TOWARD THE US AND USSR OF THE MEMBERS  
OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT TO DETERMINE THE

DIRECTION WHICH THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD PROCEED IN THE AREA OF FOREIGN POLICY.

3. MEHTA ALSO SAID THAT HE HOPED WASHINGTON WOULD RESPECT INDIA'S DESIRE TO PROCEED IN THIS WAY. HIS MEANING, I BELIEVE, WAS THAT WASHINGTON IN ITS COMMENTS SHOULD ACCEPT THE CONTINUITY OF INDIAN POLICY AND AVOID COMMENT ON ANY POSSIBLE CHANGE. I TOLD MEHTA THAT IT WAS MY VIEW THAT WASHINGTON SHOULD PROCEED SLOWLY AND CREFULLY IN ITS RELATIONS WITH INDIA, GIVING THE NEW GOVERNMENT TIME TO DECIDE UPON THE DIRECTIONS IN WHICH IT WISHES TO PROCEED. MEHTA AGREED WITH THIS POSITION ENTIRELY.

I DID NOTE TO MEHTA THAT AT SOME TIME THE STATE DEPARTMENT WOULD WANT TO TAKE A POSITION ON THE SOLARZ AMENDMENT FOR A BILATERAL AID PROGRAM AND THAT WE WOULD FIRST REPEAT FIRST WANT TO OBTAIN GOI VIEWS ON THIS. HE UNDERSTOOD AND SAID, YES, WE SHOULD DO THIS.

4. MEHTA ALSO MENTIONED THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S SENSITIVITY ON THE ARMS TO PAKISTAN QUESTION SAYING THAT VAJPAYEE HAD BEEN PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE TIMING OF THE LEAK ON THE SUPPLY OF EQUIPMENT FOR THE TANK RETROFIT PROJECT. MEHTA ALLOWED THAT VAJPAYEE DID NOT ENTIRELY UNDERSTAND THIS GENERAL ISSUE. WE AGREED IT WAS BEST LEFT TO MEA TO BRIED HIM.

5. I ALSO HAD A BRIEF CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET POLITICAL COUNSELOR FIALKOVSKI ABOUT MALTSEV'S TALK WITH CONFIDENTIAL

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VAJPAYEE. FIALKOVSKI SAID THEY FOUND THE CONVERSATION QUITE SATISFACTORY. FIALKOVSKI WAS QUITE CANDID IN SAYING THAT THE SOVIETS UNDERSTOOD THAT INDIA INTENDED TO HAVE EQUAL RELATIONS WITH ALL GLOBAL POWERS-- THE SOVIET UNION, THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA. FIALKOVSKI FRANKLY STATED THAT THIS WOULD REPRESENT A CHANGE IN INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH THOSE POWERS, SAYING HE WAS UNCERTAIN WHETHER THAT CHANGE WOULD COME IN TERMS OF IMPROVEMENT OF INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH TWO , US,CHINA) OF THE THREE OR DOWNGRADING OF ITS RELATIONS WITH ONE (USSR).

6. AT THE RISK OF SAYING THE OBVIOUS, I CONCLUDE FROM ALL OF HIS THAT WE CAN EXPECT THE GOI TO ENGINEER A QUIET CHANGE DESIGNED TO CREATE A BETTER BALANCE IN ITS RELATIONS WITH GLOBAL POWERS. THE GOI WILL FEEL BETTER ABLE TO DO THIS IF IT CAN DO SO QUIETLY AND WITHOUT COMMENT ON THE CHANGE FROM THOSE COUNTRIES WITH WHICH IT SEEKS AN IMPROVEMENT. WITH THE RETURN TO

FREE INSTITUTIONS, THE GOVERNMENT CAN EXPECT FREQUENT  
ATTACKS FROM THE OPPOSITION LEFT (FROM BOTH WITHIN  
THE CONGRESS LEFT AND THE CPI); AND THE LEFT STILL  
HAS A STING IN INDIAN POLITICS. I BELIEVE WE SHOULD  
THEREFORE BE CAREFUL IN WHAT WE SAY PUBLICLY  
ABOUT INDIAN POLICIES AND THAT WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO  
GIVE THE GOI TIME TO DECIDE WHAT ACTIVITIES IT  
WISHES TO EMPHASIZE IN OUR RELATIONSHIP. THAT IT  
DOES WISH TO INTENSIFY JOINT COOPERATION IS QUITE  
APPARENT FROM THE PRIME MINISTER'S LETTER. WHAT IS NOT  
APPARENT IS HOW IT WISHES TO DO THIS.  
SCHNEIDER

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Review Markings:**  
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